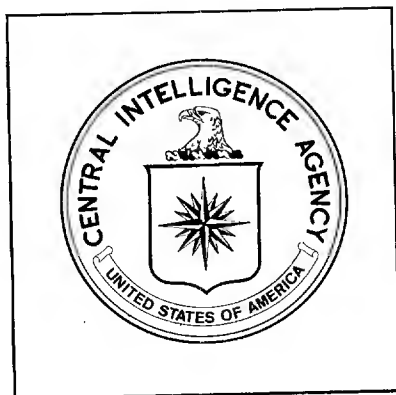


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No. 0885/75
November 25, 1975

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MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Comoro Islands

Mayotte Separatists Block Government Intervention

The Comoro government has failed in an attempt to establish its authority on the breakaway island of Mayotte. An unarmed delegation led by the defense minister made a surprise landing on the island Friday but was expelled without incident within a few hours, reportedly after being taken into custody by French forces stationed in the island. Mayotte declared its political separation from the other three islands after the Comoran government in July unilaterally declared the archipelago's independence from France. Mayotte residents want to remain linked to France. According to press reports, virtually the entire population of the island--after the government delegation landed--gathered on the airfield to prevent the landing of a second airplane carrying Comoran troops.

The "invasion" has increased the animosity between the Mayotte islanders and the Comoran government and dealt a blow to French hopes of eventually arranging a compromise providing autonomy for Mayotte within a federated state. Paris' efforts were already hampered by the need to secure the approval of the National Assembly, which is sympathetic to Mayotte's separatist designs.

In late October the French cabinet approved a bill to be submitted to parliament recognizing the independence of three of the islands and providing for a referendum in Mayotte to determine whether it would remain a part of the Comoran state. The government then felt reasonably confident that the Mayotte population would vote for union with the other islands, but this now seems unlikely. The Giscard administration, much to its own embarrassment, seems unable to shake Mayotte loose, and faces more criticism from third-world countries who have accused Paris of deliberately perpetuating a colonialist arrangement. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Kenya

Koinange's Political Star Rises

Minister of State Mbiyu Koinange's acquisition last September of control of the 10,000-man regular police and his continuing influence with President Kenyatta have made him a serious contender to succeed Kenyatta, according to the US embassy in Nairobi. Koinange already was in charge of the 1,200-man paramilitary unit of the police--a highly mobile and well trained force that serves as a counterweight to the army.

The 68-year-old Koinange, a relative of Kenyatta by marriage, had been expected to be no more than a power broker during the immediate post-Kenyatta period. Some more youthful candidate from Kenyatta's inner circle of fellow southern Kikuyus, such as former foreign minister Njoroge Mungai, was thought a more likely choice to take power.

Koinange appears to have been a leading advocate of the tough line that the President employed successfully last spring to deal with angry public reaction to the murder of regime critic J. M. Kariuki. He later orchestrated Kenyatta's campaign of reprisals, including arrests and other forms of harassment, against critics in parliament. He also organized political rallies, at which Kenyatta was the feature attraction. Koinange's efforts helped Kenyatta to depict himself as tough, vigorous, and in full control of his job.

The transfer of the regular police to Koinange, in his capacity as chief of the President's staff, weakens Vice President Daniel arap Moi, who had previously controlled the force. Moi, the constitutional interim successor to Kenyatta, has now been deprived of direct control of any of the security organizations. That may well weaken his hand during the transitional period.

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Koinange is not a popular figure, even among members of his own tribal group. He is widely believed to have been implicated in the Kariuki murder. His emergence as a contender to succeed Kenyatta may result in sharper infighting among the Kikuyu and increased tensions during the transitional period.
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